



MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
State Fire Marshal Division
STATEMENT OF POLICY

Policy #: INS ED – 06 (2007)	Subject of Policy: Use of Portable Planetariums in Schools	
Reviewed and Approved By: Jerry Rosendahl	Title: State Fire Marshal	Revised Date: July 10, 2007

APPLIES TO:

State Fire Marshal Inspection Personnel

PURPOSE:

To provide guidance on the use of portable planetariums in educational occupancies.

POLICY:

Air-supported planetariums may be used in schools provided the following fire safety issues are adhered to. This policy may be revoked or amended as new information becomes available and experience with inflated planetariums broadens.

1. Inflated planetariums must be constructed of flame-resistant material (MSFC (07) section 807).
2. Planetariums can only be erected in gymnasiums or multi-purpose rooms that have high ceilings so sprinkler heads, smoke detectors and light fixtures will not be compromised and a space of 6 feet must be maintained around the entire planetarium to allow for quick emergency egress. Planetariums are not allowed in corridors or other exit paths (MSFC (07) section 1027).
3. The maximum occupant load within the planetarium must be limited to 7 sq. ft. per person of open floor space or the maximum occupant load as designated by the manufacturer – whichever is less. If audio-visual equipment occupies interior space, the maximum occupant load of 7 sq. ft. per person must be computed on the open, unrestricted floor space (MSFC (07) section 1004.1.1).
4. An operable flashlight must be readily available to the instructor within the planetarium for emergency lighting (MSFC (07) section 1006.1).
5. Two adults must be available at all times to assist in evacuation – one inside the planetarium and one outside the planetarium (MSFC (07) section 1014 & 1027).
6. Emergency egress procedures such as moving to the center of the planetarium so the outside walls can be picked up must be explained to the students each time the planetarium is used (MSFC (07) section 405).
7. A written evacuation plan must be developed based on the foregoing fire safety precautions, practiced with actual drills and reviewed with each instructor using the planetarium (MSFC (07) section 406).